

BACKGROUND READING IN HISTORICAL JEWISH CHILDREN'S LITERATURE

Recommended by Linda R. Silver

To weed or not to weed? Every librarian is faced with that question, especially when it comes to older books that may or may not have some historical value. Jewish literature for children published in English in America is a relatively new field that began to flourish in the years between the two World Wars. Many of the first books for children were textbooks but story books and biographies were also published, most of them are out-of-print by now. The reading list below is meant to be a guide to help librarians decide if that old book with the drab cover, yellowed pages, and uninviting format is worth hanging onto – as many probably are.

Cedarbaum, Sophia N. 1968. "American Jewish Juvenile Literature during the Past Twenty-Five years." *Jewish Book Annual* 25:

Davis, Enid. *A Comprehensive Guide to Children's Literature with a Jewish Theme*. NY: Schocken Books, 1981.

Diner, Hasia. *Lower East Side Memories: A Jewish Place in America*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton Univ. Press, 2000.

Elswit, Sharon Barcan. *The Jewish Story Finder: A Guide to 363 Tales Listing Subjects and Sources*. Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2005.

Engman, Suzy and Cheryl Silberberg Grossman. *Jewish Literature for Children: A Teaching Guide*. Denver, CO: Alternatives in Religious Education, 1985.

Frischer, Rita. "Children's Literature." *Jewish Women in America: An Historical Encyclopedia*, 1997.

Goldstein, Fanny. "The Jewish Child in Bookland." *Jewish Book Annual*, Vol. 5, 1946-1947, pp. 84-100.

Summarizes the state of Jewish children's book publishing in the pre-war years and in the current period with extensive lists of recommended books in English. Publication dates go back to the late 1800's. Five publishers are mentioned: Behrman House, Bloch, JPS, UAHC, and Hebrew Publishing Co.

Gamoran, Emanuel. "For Teachers and Parents," vii –ix. *Hillel's Happy Holidays* by Mamie Gamoran. Union of American Hebrew Congregations, 1955.

Grand, Samuel and Mamie G. Gamoran. *Emanuel Gamoran: His Life and His Work*. Emanuel

- Gamoran Memorial Fund, 1979.
- Joselit, Jenna Weissman 1990. *The Wonders of America: Reinventing Jewish Culture, 1880-1950*. New York: Hill and Wang.
- Krasner, Jonathan. A Recipe for American Jewish Integration: The Adventures of K'tonton and Hillel's Happy Holidays. *The Lion and the Unicorn*, Sept. 2003, 344-361.
- Letters Dipped in Honey: Jewish Children's Literature from the Moldovan Family Collection*.
Catalog of an Exhibit at Yeshiva University Museum, 1996.
- Melamed, Deborah M. 1923-1924. Jewish Children's Books. *The Jewish Quarterly Review: New Series* XIV: 393-394.
- Patz, Naomi M. and Philip E. Miller 1980. Jewish Religious Children's Literature in America: An Analytical Survey. *Phaedrus*, 1980:
- Posner, Marcia W. 1993. Fifty Years of Jewish Children's Books in the Jewish Book Annual. *Jewish Book Annual* 50: 81-98.
- Sarna, Jonathan 1989. *JPS: The Americanization of Jewish Culture, 1888-1988*. Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society.
- Sarna, Jonathan. From K'tonton to the Torah. *Moment*, Oct.1990, 44-47.
- Schine, Penny Gold. *Making the Bible Modern: Children's Bibles and Jewish Education in Twentieth-Century America*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2004.
- Silver, Linda R. *Best Jewish Books for Children and Teens: A JPS Guide*. Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society, 2010. Release date: October 2010.
- Silver, Linda R. "Jewish Children's Literature Comes of Age." *The Jewish Values Finder: A Guide to Values in Jewish Children's Literature*. NY: Neal Schuman, 2008
- Silver, Linda R. "Ktonton Started It." *Women's League Outlook Magazine*. Fall 2005.

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